

A2012-102

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RECEIVED

December 31, 2011

Received

2012 JAN 10 P 5:25

Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Ave NW Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268-0001

JAN 10 2012

POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Postal Commission:

Office of PAGR

**RE: Post Office Closure
(Parlin, Sargent and Pitkin, Colorado Post Offices)**

I write this letter from the perspective of:

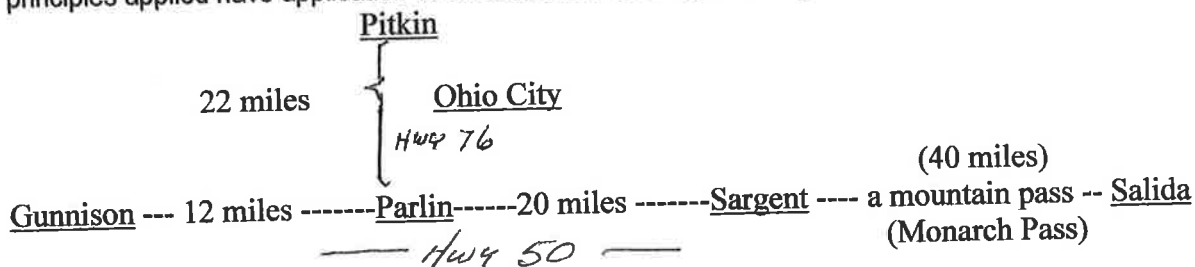
- 1) A resident of the postal areas of the above mention communities.
- 2) The immediate past president of the Quartz Creek Improvement Association, representing the communities of Parlin, Ohio City and Pitkin, Colorado.

Thank you to the Postal Commission for the opportunities provided for community input through question/answer sessions and letters on this topic.

A need for change is apparent, if not long over due. The still important issue is that such change needs to have careful review of issues and community circumstances plus application of common sense. Change put in place, it would seem should meet universal criteria; I offer the following:

- 1) Demonstrate sound economical practice; efficient delivery of services to the greatest numbers of people in the most economical manner.
- 2) Recognize the Congressional action (Law) for providing Postal service most specifically to small and rural communities/postal dependent areas, and preventing the Post Office closures that will have a dramatic adverse impact on the communities (this objective is recognized as being in conflict with #1, as was recognized when Congress passed the legislation). Post Offices are part of a universal communications network.
- 3) Demonstrate a system which recognizes the development of alternative cyber-communication advances, intending to compliment such systems rather than compete with them. This point also draws attention to areas (remote and inter-mountain) where such communication is not available.

Comments are specific to the Post Offices in Parlin, Pitkin, and Sargent, Colorado. Certainly the principles applied have application to other areas. Following is a diagram of the area:



- 1) From Gunnison (east) to Salida, Colorado is a 62 mile distance on U.S. Hwy 50. Monarch Pass is 10,000 ft, creating a natural barrier between the two communities as well as an issue regarding weather problems (snow and ice) six months of the year.
- 2) The entire area, considered here, is sparsely inhabited:
 - Sargent, the most remote, at the foot of Monarch Pass on Hwy. 50. The post office location consists of a gas station, a restaurant, and; residents - perhaps 10 year around, area ranches and some summer residents.

- Parlin, is the most centrally located between Monarch Pass and Gunnison on Hwy 50. The post office location consists of a convenience store and some cabins. It sits on the junction to County Hwy 76 which travels north to Ohio City and Pitkin.
 - Ohio City, is ten miles north of Parlin; postal service is provided by CBUs (clustered box unit). The community consists of 30 year around residents and double that number for the summer.
 - Pitkin, is twenty-two miles north of Parlin; travel beyond is limited to summer months due to snow. There are 30 - 40 year around residents, which increases to perhaps 80- 90 in the summer months.
- 3) When serving this area, the following defined options are offered:
- a) Option 1 - Maintain the Parlin Post Office (close Sargent and Pitkin):
 - ✓ Most centrally located between Gunnison and Monarch Pass
 - ✓ Located on Hwy. 50; Hwy 50 is the primary transportation corridor between Salida west to Gunnison and west to Montrose, Colorado
 - ✓ Located at junction of Hwy. 50 and County Hwy 76, which travels north to Ohio City and Pitkin.
 - ✓ Is the most central location allowing for distribution to Sargent (20 miles east) and Pitkin plus Ohio City (the 22 miles to the north)
 - b) Option 2 – Maintain the Parlin and Sargent Post Offices (close Pitkin):
 - ✓ Both Post Offices are located on Hwy 50; the postal transportation route between Salida and Gunnison; requiring only a stop along the existing postal route for mail drop-off and pick-up.
 - c) Option 3 – Close all three Post Offices; serve communities through the CBUs (clustered box unit):
 - ✓ Believe this decision would be most contrary to Congress legislation; significant reduction of service for the rural/remote area between Gunnison and Monarch Pass.
 - ✓ Maintaining the Pitkin Post Office would seem to be the most inefficient option due to distance from Hwy 50 and the inefficiency of serving other communities; Pitkin sits at the end of County Hwy. 76 and travel during snow months.

Other Considerations:

- 1) Limited service (Shorter postal days and closure on Saturdays) were changes supported during community input sessions. Such changes make economical sense, while maintaining postal services for residents and area businesses in this rural and remote area.
- 2) Comments (Docket 1376876, item 47) provided by the postal service reflecting the conversation from 5/13/2011 input meeting in Ohio City.
 - ✓ The information reflected that the Parlin postmaster position was vacated 5/24/10; this information does not reflect properly the situation. The postmaster was temporarily placed in Almont, Colorado 18 months prior to the 5/24 date. And, contrary to postal service guidelines the Parlin Post Office was without a postmaster for 2 years plus, even though qualified and interested candidates were available, and in fact the OIC serving the office is a candidate for the position.
- 3) Change in the delivery of postal services is in order. Instituting change with efficiency and consideration for geographic issues along with existing community populations seems important. Thank you for your audience on this topic.

Respectfully,

